

Report to:	Planning Committee
Date of Meeting:	23 August 2011
Report by:	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

Application No	CL/11/0298
Planning Proposal:	Erection of wind turbine (27m in height to blade tip)

1 Summary Application Information

- Application Type : Detailed Planning Application
- Applicant : Mr Alexander Allison
- Location : Easton Farm
Dunsyre
ML11 8NQ

2 Recommendation(s)

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) Grant Detailed Planning Permission (Subject to Conditions – Based on Conditions Listed Overleaf)

2.2 Other Actions/Notes

- (1) The Planning Committee has delegated powers to determine this application.

3 Other Information

- ◆ Applicant's Agent: Energy Saving Projects
- ◆ Council Area/Ward: 03 Clydesdale East
- ◆ Policy Reference(s): **South Lanarkshire Local Plan (adopted 2009)**
 - Policy STRAT4: Accessible Rural Area
 - Policy CRE2: Stimulating the Rural Economy Policy
 - Policy ENV16: Renewable Energy Development
 - Policy ENV38: Renewable Energy Site Assessment
 - Policy ENV29: Special Landscape Area
 - Policy ENV4: Protection of the Natural and Built Environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Renewable Energy (adopted December 2010)

- Policy REN1: Areas of Significant Protection
- Policy REN4: Single/small Wind Turbine

Developments
- Policy REN6: Assessment Checklist for
Renewable Energy Proposals

◆ Representation(s):

- ▶ 0 Objection Letters
- ▶ 0 Support Letters
- ▶ 0 Comments Letters

◆ Consultation(s):

Ministry of Defence

West of Scotland Archaeology Service

National Air Traffic Services Ltd

BAA Aerodrome Safeguarding

Planning Application Report

1 Application Site

- 1.1 The application site consists of part of an agricultural field associated with Easton Farm which is located just under 1.5km to the north-east of the village of Dunsyre. The site is located in an elevated position 370 metres from the unclassified road which runs to the south of the site. The farm steading and three farm cottages are located to the north of the site. Other than these premises there are no other dwellinghouses in close vicinity. The site is surrounded by a number of notable hills including Black Mount to the south, Mid Hill immediately to the north-west and Dunsyre Hill immediately to the west. Dunsyre Hill is also classed as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. There are a number of areas of woodland in the locality of the site. A right of way runs past the site along the vehicular access leading up to the farm and continues onwards to the north.

2 Proposal(s)

- 2.1 Detailed planning permission is sought for the erection of a wind turbine which measures 27 metres in height to the blade tip. The turbine would provide a maximum output of 20 kw. The mast would be finished in a matt grey colour with both the generator casing and the blades being finished in a non-reflective off-white colour. A supporting statement submitted by the applicant advises that the turbine will help reduce the carbon footprint of the farm.

3 Background

3.1 Local Plan Status

- 3.1.1 In terms of local plan policy the site is located in the Accessible Rural Area where Policy STRAT4: Accessible Rural Area and Policy CRE2: Stimulating the Rural Economy apply. The site is located within a Special Landscape Area therefore Policies ENV4: Protection of the Natural and Built Environment and ENV29: Special Landscape Areas are relevant.

- 3.1.2 Given that the proposal relates to a renewable energy development, Policy ENV16: Renewable Energy Development and Policy ENV38: Renewable Energy Site Assessment also apply. The renewable energy policy context is further set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance: Renewable Energy (SPG) which was adopted in December 2010. Within this document Policies REN1: Areas of Significant Protection, REN4: Single/small Wind Turbine Developments and REN6: Assessment Checklist for Renewable Energy Proposals apply.

3.2 Relevant Government Advice/Policy

- 3.2.1 Scottish Planning Policy outlines the commitment to increase the amount of electricity generated from renewable sources (50% of Scotland's electricity to be generated from renewable sources by 2020 and 11% of heat demand to be met from renewable sources). It states that planning authorities should support the development of a diverse range of renewable energy technologies, guide development to appropriate locations and provide clarity on the issues that will be taken into account when specific proposals are assessed. It further advises that development plans should support all scales of development associated with the generation of energy and heat from renewable sources taking account of relevant economic, social, environmental and transport issues.

3.3 Planning Background

- 3.3.1 There are no records of any previous planning applications on the application site.

3.3.2 Normally an application of this nature would be delegated however amendments made to planning legislation, which came into force in 2009, require applications made by Local Members to be determined by a Committee.

4 Consultation(s)

4.1 **Ministry of Defence (Safeguarding – Wind Energy)** – confirm that they have no objection to the proposal. They state that if planning permission is granted the applicant must advise them of when the proposal commences and is completed.

Response: Noted. This matter can be covered by an informative if consent is granted.

4.2 **West of Scotland Archaeology Service** – advise that there are many recorded archaeological sites in the surrounding landscape and recommend that a condition is placed on any consent granted to ensure the developer secures the implementation of an archaeological watching brief.

Response: Noted. This matter can be covered by condition if consent is granted.

4.3 **National Air Traffic Services Ltd** – offer no objection.

Response: Noted.

4.4 **BAA Aerodrome Safeguarding** – offer no objection.

Response: Noted.

5 Representation(s)

5.1 Neighbour notification was not required to be served. Due to the nature and scale of the development the application was advertised in the local press, however, no representations have been received.

6 Assessment and Conclusions

6.1 The applicant seeks planning consent for the erection of a wind turbine, measuring 27 metres in height to the tip of the blade, on land associated with Easton Farm near Dunsyre. The determining issues which require to be taken into account in the assessment of this proposal are its compliance with local plan policy and the guidance contained within the Renewable Energy SPG.

6.2 The application site is located within the Accessible Rural Area where Policy STRAT4 states that the local plan strategy will be to build on the economic potential of the area's high quality natural and built environment and tourism potential and to ensure that these qualities are not eroded. Policy CRE2: Stimulating the Rural Economy provides guidance on a range of uses that the Council would consider appropriate within the countryside subject to other planning considerations such as access, design, amenity and impact on the environment being satisfactorily met. Energy-related developments are listed as an acceptable use in the countryside so long as it meets the criteria in Policy ENV 38: Renewable Energy Site Assessment.

6.3 Turning to the specific renewable energy policies in the local plan, two are relevant. Policy ENV16: Renewable Energy Development states that the wider application of medium and smaller scale renewable technologies will generally be supported by the Council provided that they meet the relevant criteria in Policy ENV38. The criteria within Policy ENV38: Renewable Energy Site Assessment cover a number of issues

such as impact on landscape character, the cumulative impact of windfarm developments on the landscape, impact on local nature conservation sites, impact on ecological and ornithological interests, impact on residents, impact on views from tourist routes, radar and air safety issues and access for construction traffic.

- 6.4 One of the objectives of the Renewable Energy SPG is to set out a policy framework to guide small scale wind energy development. The SPG identifies the site as lying within a Special Landscape Area and within the Southern Uplands Foothills and Pentland Hills area of significant protection. Policy REN1: Areas of Significant Protection of the SPG states that development proposals in areas of significant protection shall not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that they address certain requirements. In this particular case this involves the submission of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. The policy also states that the proposal should be assessed against the relevant criteria in Policy REN6: Assessment Checklist for Renewable Energy Proposals.
- 6.5 Policy REN4: Single/Small Wind Turbine Developments states that applications for single/small turbine developments will only be acceptable if they accord with certain guidance. In this case developers must demonstrate that the turbine can be accommodated without adversely affecting the open and undeveloped character of the area and without creating cumulative impact with wind farms in neighbouring landscape character areas. Policy REN6: Assessment Checklist for Renewable Energy Proposals covers the same issues as listed under the criteria of the relevant local plan policy (ENV38).
- 6.6 The site is located within an area of significant protection from wind farm development. The SPG refers to the requirement for the submission of a landscape and visual impact assessment for proposals in this area. Nevertheless there will be cases where a detailed assessment is not required depending on the circumstances of the proposal. In this case, the applicant has submitted a photomontage demonstrating how the turbine would look when viewed from a position on the southern side of the valley. A detailed assessment of the proposal on the wider area has been carried out on site and it is not considered that further details are necessary in this case. The viewpoint information provided illustrates that this small scale turbine can be accommodated within this landscape appropriately. The position of the turbine consolidates well with both the traditional stone-built farm buildings and large steel agricultural sheds at the site. From other locations within this area, a direct view of the turbine cannot be easily seen due to the many tree-belts in the area, the topography of the landscape and the remoteness of the site. A development of two turbines can be viewed to the east of the site in the Garvald area which falls outwith the South Lanarkshire Council boundary. Given the distance that these turbines sit from the proposal and the existence of the pockets of trees, it is considered that they will not have a direct cumulative impact with the proposed turbine.
- 6.7 A terrace of farm cottages is located at Easton Farm, however the cottages are orientated in such a way that they would not receive a direct view of the proposed turbine. In addition there is an area of trees located between the turbine and the side elevation of the cottages. No representations have been received and it is considered that the proposal will not have an adverse impact on neighbouring residents.
- 6.8 Policies ENV4: Protection of the Natural and Built Environment and Policy ENV29: Special Landscape Area of the local plan also apply. However it is considered that the proposal complies with these policies for the reasons set out above. In addition

the proposal is at a scale that will not have an adverse impact on ecology, birds or protected species. The historic landscape and the Dunsyre Hill scheduled ancient monument will not be affected by the proposal as the position of the turbine is a significant distance from the location of the scheduled ancient monument. A condition can be attached to ensure that an archaeological watching brief is produced by the applicant to safeguard any archaeological remains which may be discovered during the construction process.

6.9 To conclude, although the site is located within an area of special protection, the characteristics of this particular site and the small scale of the turbine are such that the proposal will not have an adverse impact on the landscape character or a significant cumulative impact with other turbines in the area. I am therefore satisfied that the proposal meets the terms of the policies contained within the adopted local plan and the SPG. In view of this it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

7 Reasons for Decision

7.1 The proposal complies with Policies STRAT4, CRE2, ENV16, ENV38, ENV29 and ENV4 of the South Lanarkshire Local Plan as well as the policies contained within the Renewable Energy SPG.

Colin McDowall
Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

8 August 2011

Previous References

◆ None

List of Background Papers

- ▶ Application Form
- ▶ Application Plans

- ▶ Consultations
 - BAA Aerodrome Safeguarding 22/07/2011
 - Ministry of Defence 01/08/2011
 - West of Scotland Archaeology Service 22/07/2011
 - Ministry of Defence 29/07/2011
 - National Air Traffic Services Ltd 11/07/2011

- ▶ Representations
 - None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Gail Rae, Planning Officer, South Vennel, Lanark, M111 7JT
(Tel :01555 673205)
E-mail: Enterprise.lanark@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

CONDITIONS

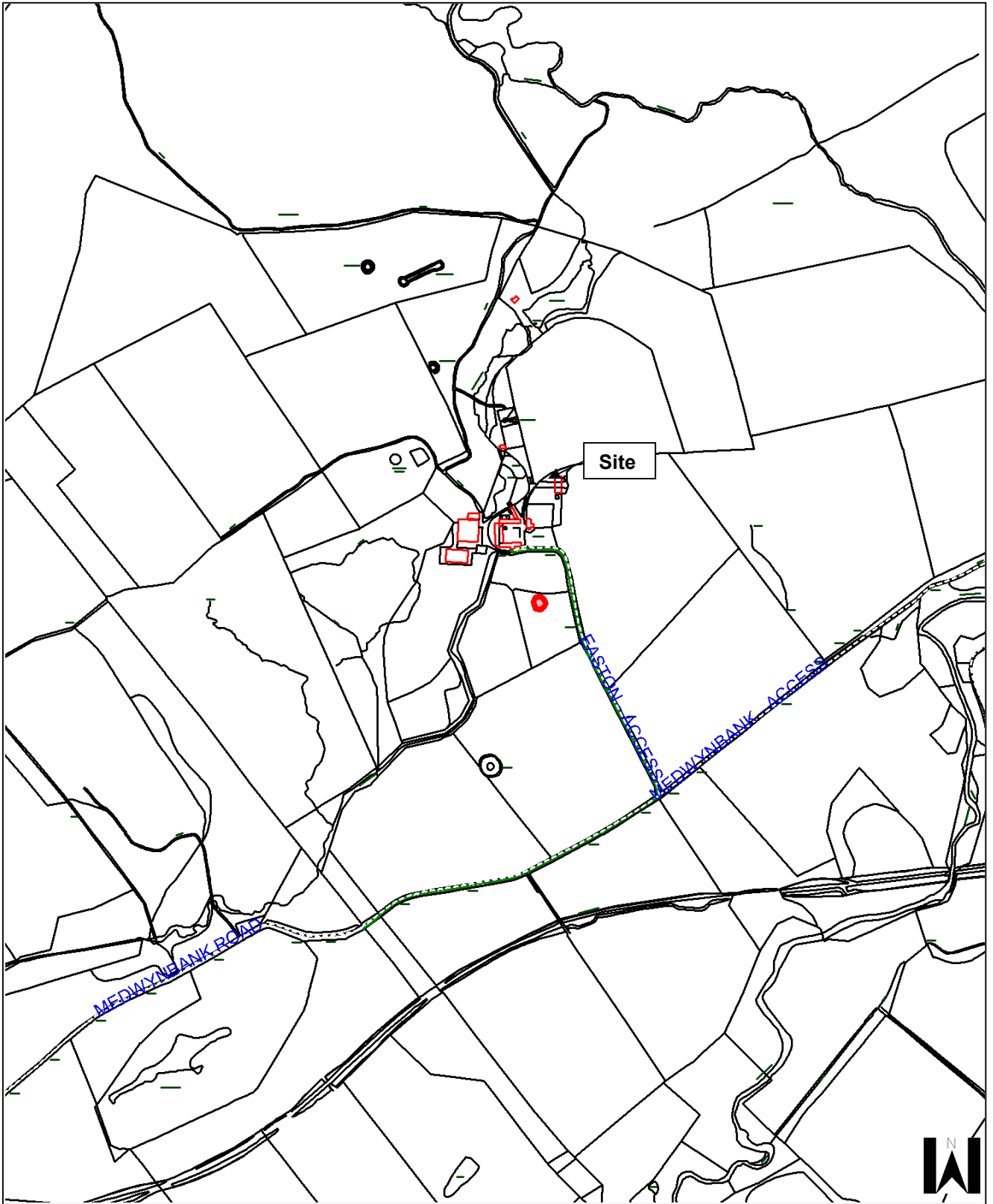
- 1 The consent shall be carried out strictly in accordance with drawing numbers: AA001, AA002, Elevation Drg of Turbine dated 10 Aug 2010.
- 2 That the permission hereby granted is for a temporary period only and shall expire on 25 years from the date of the consent.
- 3 That the development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the plans hereby approved and no change to the design or external finishes shall take place without the prior written approval of the Council as Planning Authority.
- 4 That on expiry of 25 years from the date of the permission or in the event that turbine becomes obsolete or redundant it must be removed and the site reinstated to grassed agricultural ground to the satisfaction of the planning authority within 3 months.
- 5 That the developer shall secure the implementation of an archaeological watching brief, to be carried out by an archaeological organisation acceptable to the Council as Planning Authority, during all ground disturbance. The retained archaeological organisation shall be afforded access at all reasonable times and allowed to record and recover items of interest and finds. A method statement for the watching brief will be submitted by the applicant, agreed by the West of Scotland Archaeology Service, and approved by the Planning Authority prior to commencement of the watching brief. The name of the archaeological organisation retained by the developer shall be given to the Planning Authority and to the West of Scotland Archaeology Service in writing not less than 14 days before development commences.

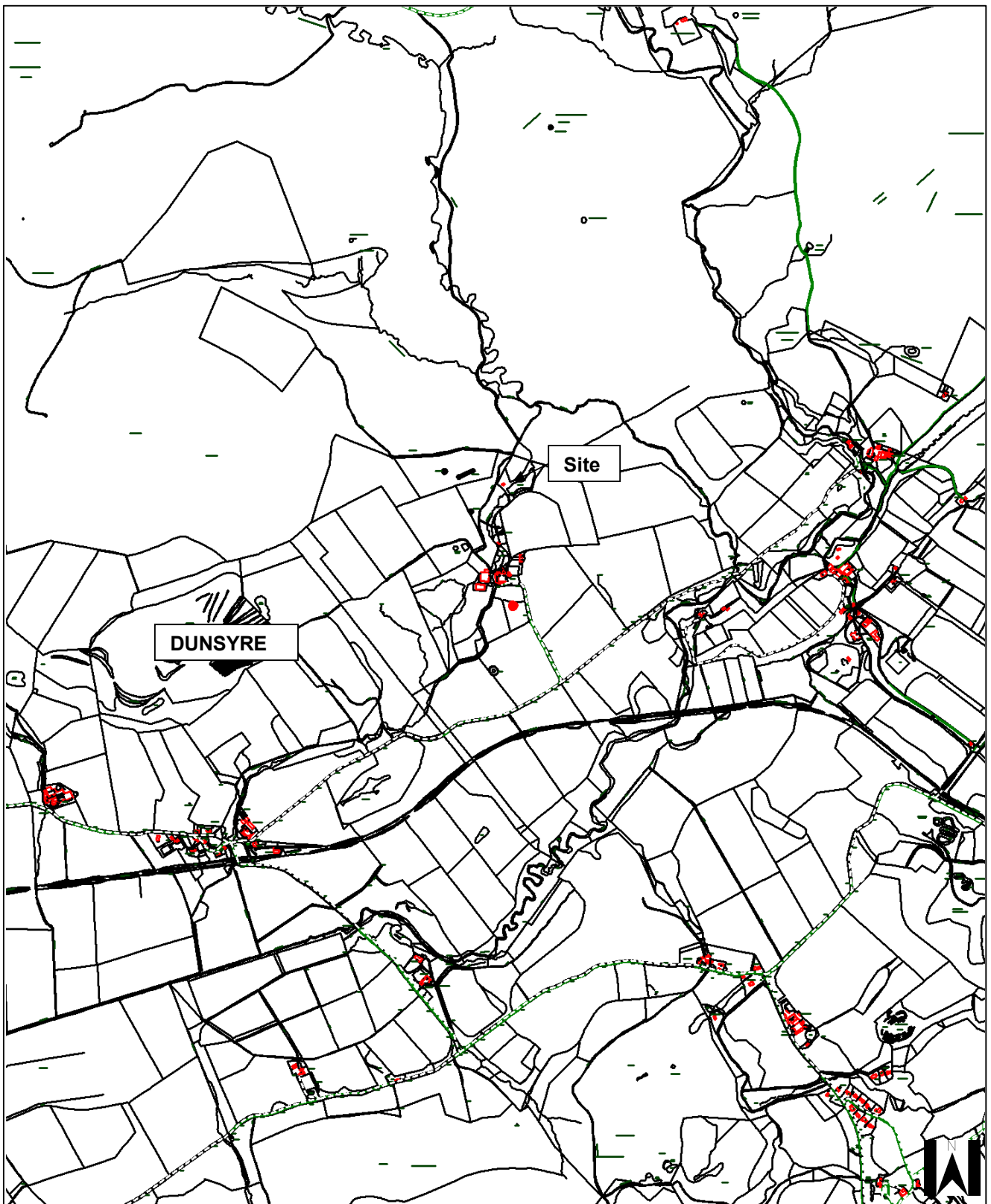
REASONS

- 1 For the avoidance of doubt and to specify the drawings upon which the decision was made.
- 2 Temporary Consent is hereby granted
- 3 In the interests of amenity and in order to retain effective planning control.
- 4 To minimise the level of visual intrusion, and ensure the reinstatement of the site to a satisfactory standard.
- 5 To ensure that provision is made to address areas of archaeological interest.

For information only

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